

GOVERNMENT OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA  
BOARD OF ZONING ADJUSTMENT



Application No. 12645 of the Faith Baptist Church, pursuant to Sub-section 8207.2 and Paragraph 8207.11 of the Zoning Regulations, for a special exception under Paragraph 3101.42 to permit a primary school and for a variance from the parking requirements (Sub-section 7202.1) to permit the Capitol Hill Montessori School in the R-4 District at the premises 901 South Carolina Avenue, S.E., (Square 946, Lot 805).

HEARING DATE: May 17, 1978

DECISION DATE: May 31, 1978

FINDINGS OF FACT:

1. The subject site has frontage on South Carolina Avenue, 9th and "D" Street, S.E. and is known as 901 South Carolina Avenue, S.E. It is in an R-4 District.

2. The subject site is 10,113 square feet and is improved with the Faith Baptist Church which was built before 1958 and provides no off-street parking. The church is substantially setback from the property line and surrounded by a well maintained lawn. A small fenced in play area, approximate area 400 square feet, is provided on the D Street side of the site.

3. Adjoining the church on both South Carolina Avenue and D Street are two story row houses. On the opposite side of 9th Street, facing the site, is a park which is being improved. One block south of the site is Pennsylvania Avenue, a major arterial and commercial corridor. One block east of the site at 8th and Pennsylvania Avenue is the Eastern Market Metro Station. The main entrance to the subject school fronts on South Carolina Avenue. The subject improvement occupies 100 per cent of the lot.

4. By BZA Order No. 12088, dated April 20, 1976, the Board granted permission to the applicant to establish a day care center for seventy-seven children with six teachers. Variance relief from four off-street parking spaces was also granted.

5. The applicant is presently operating a Montessori School for seventy-seven children (ages 2½ to six). The operation is characterized by the Zoning Regulations as a day care center. The applicant proposes to transfer its junior class (ages six to ten) presently located in a church at 13th and Massachusetts Avenue, N.E., to the subject site. Thirty students are presently enrolled therein and a maximum enrollment of sixty students and three teachers is requested. The application, if granted, will bring the total enrollment of the school to 137 children, five teachers, four aides and two administrative persons. The nursery school children are in classrooms on the basement level while the proposed sixty member primary school class will locate on the first level in a multi-purpose room that is proposed to be partitioned.

6. The nursery school operates from 9:00 a.m. to 11:45 a.m. The proposed primary school will operate from 8:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m.

7. Studies were made by MPO of arrival to and departures from the site. The study of arrivals to the site was conducted on May 12, 1978 from 8 to 9:30 A.M. There appeared to be no appreciable amount of congestion caused by the current nursery school. Approximately fifty-five per cent of the seventy-seven children arrived by automobile while forty-five per cent walked to the site accompanied by an adult. The double parking accompanying the discharge of children from automobiles did not create traffic congestion on South Carolina Avenue.

8. A study of departures from the site conducted on May 11, 1978 at 3:00 P.M. revealed no significant amount of traffic congestion associated with the use. However, it was noted that a substantial amount of the enrollment was discharged at noon. The applicant indicated that the discharge of students takes place on D Street to alleviate traffic congestion on South Carolina Avenue. A residential parking permit plan is in effect on the South Carolina side of the site and there is a two hour parking limitation on D Street side of the site. There was adequate curb parking available at the times of the site inspections.

9. A neighboring resident has offered two off-street parking spaces for the applicant's use.

10. Floor plans were submitted, marked as Exhibit 38 in the record reflecting that the total space for the five levels of the subject building is 15,513 square feet of which 4,426.25 square feet is reserved for class space and 11,186.75 square feet is reserved for play space.

11. The Municipal Planning Office, by report dated May 11, 1978 recommended conditional approval of the application on the grounds that the proposed use and approval of the parking variance would not be objectionable to adjoining and nearby property because of noise, traffic, number of students, or other objectionable conditions. The Board so finds. The approval of the MPO had been conditioned upon the fact that at the time of its report no floor plans had been submitted reflecting the number of square feet that would still be available when both the nursery and primary schools were combined on the one site. The Board finds that there is evidence in the record demonstrating that there is sufficient play space available.

12. There were many letters and petitions on file, of neighbors in support of the application. There was one letter in opposition.

13. The Capitol Hill Restoration Society, Inc., voted in favor of the application on the grounds that their survey found positive neighborhood support for the school, that the existing church structure occupies 100 per cent of its lot making provisions for off-street parking spaces impossible and that the unusual shape, size and coverage of the existing structure would be greatly under utilized if it could be used only for church purposes.

14. Advisory Neighborhood Commission 6B, by resolution adopted on May 6, 1978, endorsed the application on the grounds that after considering the views of affected residents and school representatives the consolidated operation of the school at the Faith Baptist Church would benefit the children of the area without contributing to traffic congestion.

CONCLUSIONS OF LAW:

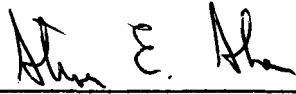
Based on the record the Board concludes that the combined school is so located that it is not likely to become objectionable to adjoining and nearby property because of noise, traffic, number of students, or otherwise objectionable conditions. The Board further concludes that the granting of the relief sought will be in harmony with the general purpose and intent of the Zoning Regulations and maps and will not tend to affect adversely the use of neighboring property. Accordingly it is ORDERED that the application is GRANTED SUBJECT to the following CONDITIONS:

1. Approval shall be limited to the Capitol Hill Montessori School only.
2. There shall be a maximum of sixty students enrolled in the primary school program and a maximum total of 137 students enrolled in both nursery and primary programs.
3. Approval shall be for a period of THREE years, which may be renewed at the discretion of the Board upon the filing of a proper application.
4. The applicant shall comply with all the requirements of the Building Code related to fire egress.
5. The hours of operation shall be limited to between 8:00 a.m. and 3:00 p.m.

VOTE: 5-0 (Charles R. Norris, William F. McItosh, Chloethiel Woodard Smith, John G. Parsons and Leonard L. McCants)

BY ORDER OF THE D.C. BOARD OF ZONING ADJUSTMENT

ATTESTED BY: \_\_\_\_\_

  
STEVEN E. SHER  
Executive Director

FINAL DATE OF ORDER: 16 JUN 1978

THAT THE ORDER OF THE BOARD IS VALID FOR A PERIOD OF SIX MONTHS ONLY UNLESS APPLICATION FOR A BUILDING AND/OR OCCUPANCY PERMIT IS FILED WITH THE DEPARTMENT OF HOUSING AND COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT WITHIN A PERIOD OF SIX MONTHS AFTER THE EFFECTIVE DATE OF THIS ORDER.